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AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Government engineers say a backwoods inventor's amazing energy machine has a number of unique features but lacks a critical one -- it doesn't work.

The National Bureau of Standards said Thursday that more than two months of court-ordered testing has failed to prove Joseph W. Newman's claims that his controversial machine produces more energy than it consumes.

"At all conditions tested, the input power exceeded the output power," the government's standards-setting agency said in a report. "That is, the device did not deliver more energy than it used."

Newman, who terms himself a self-educated, backwoods inventor from Lucedale, Miss., who used common sense to come up with his machine, immediately rejected the test results as biased and meaningless.

The agency by its own admission used unconventional instruments and methods to reach its conclusions, said Newman, whose quest for a government patent has attracted national attention.

"I do not accept these results at all," Newman said in a telephone interview. "I predicted this decision. It's just another example of the injustice I'm fighting against."

The bureau's report said that because of unusual electrical characteristics of the machine, it had to design a test plan and combination of instruments specifically for Newman's non-standard device. But it said it carefully checked the instruments to assure the accuracy of the tests.

Newman said he would not accept results coming from unconventional testing that could not be repeated by others.

"If I built my own test equipment and said that it proves my machine worked, no one would give me much credit, no one would believe me,"

Newman said. "But that's what the Bureau of Standards has done and they expect people to believe them."

The inventor has been trying for six years to get the U.S. Office of Patents and Trademarks to issue a patent on an energy machine that defies accepted laws of physics.

Patent examiners say the invention looks like yet another proposal

for a perpetual motion machine, one that would produce more energy than it uses so that, theoretically, it could run forever.

This has been the goal of inventors for centuries, but conventional science says it is impossible.

Newman contends his device is not a perpetual motion machine, but a revolutionary energy source that uses the previously unknown magnetic properties of copper coils to release more energy than it consumes.

U.S. District Judge Thomas P. Jackson, presiding over Newman's suit against the patent office, ordered a new trial date after getting results of the tests he ordered from the bureau.

John P. Flannery, Newman's lawyer, said Jackson set Dec. 8 as the date for a non-jury trial to determine if the inventor will be awarded the patent.

Flannery said he asked the judge to permit Newman to examine the special equipment used to test the energy machine, but that Jackson refused to order it. If the Patent Office does not allow examination of the test devices, Flannery said, he would seek another court order to do so.

The Bureau of Standards said that during the testing, it found that Newman's device "behaves in a manner which is entirely consistent with well-established laws of physics."

A device would be called 100 percent energy efficient if it simply transmitted all the energy coming into it back to the outside, the report said, and it would have to show an efficiency of greater than 100 percent to make more power than it consumed.

The bureau said the efficiency of Newman's machine ranged between 27 percent and 67 percent, depending upon the test being run.

Never did the energy coming out of the machine exceed the battery power going into the device to get it running, the report said.

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